

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 DRC-01 /123 W

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R 281410Z FEB 74

FM AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2374

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMCONSUL LUANDA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LOURENCO MARQUES 0133

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, MZ

SUBJECT: NEW COMMANDER IN CHIEF BASTO MACHADO

REF: (A) LOURENCO MARQUES 902 OF DECEMBER 28, 1973;  
(B) LOURENCO MARQUES 62 OF JANUARY 25, 1574

1. DURING MY RECENT VISIT IN BEIRA, AGENCE FRANCE PRESS  
CORRESPONDENT TOLD ME HE HAD HEARD RUMOR COMMANDER IN CHIEF  
GENERAL BASTO MACHADO WILL SOON BE REPLACED, POSSIBLY BY AIR  
FORCE GENERAL MANUEL DIOGO NETO,  
PRESENTLY COMMANDER OF MOZAMBIQUE AIR FORCE WHO WAS CALLED  
TO LISBON LAST WEEK. SOURCE SAID NETO HAD BEEN OFFERED  
THIS JOB WHEN KAULZA DE ARRIAGO LEFT, BUT HAD TURNED IT DOWN  
ON GROUNDS THAT, AS MOST JUNIOR FULL GENERAL (JUST PROMOTED)  
HE WOULD PREFR NOT BEING JUMPED OVER OTHER ELIGIBLE SENIORS.  
(COMMENT: SOUNDS TOO NOBLE TO BE TRUE.) SOURCE CLAIMS MACHADO  
WAS THE ONLY GENERAL WHO WOULD ACCEPT THE JOB, AND DID SO  
ONLY BECAUSE HE IS DUE TO RETIRE SOON.

2. SOURCE DESCRIBED MACHADO AS "NONENTITY", GOOD OFFICE  
WORKER, SKILLED IN ORGANIZING FILES BUT UNTRAINED IN ACTUAL  
COMBAT. SOURCE SAID HE HAD FIRST CONSIDERED MACHADO ONLY  
COLORLESS, QUIET AND MODEST BUT PROBABLY A GOOD SOLDIER FOR  
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ALL THAT. AFTER TRAVELLUNG WITH HIM AND OBSERVING HIM IN

ACTION, HOWEVER, HE FEELS MACHADO HAS MUCH TO BE MODEST ABOUT, DOES NOT HAVE THE VIGOR, LEADERSHIP QUALITIES, OR PERSONALITY FOR THE JOB.

3. COMMENT: I CANNOT CONFIRM ABOVE REPORT RE MACHADO'S REMOVAL. I HAVE SPOKEN WITH MACHADO ONLY FOUR TIMES, ALL IN LOURENCO MARQUES AND HAVE NOT HAD OPPORTUNITY TO SEE HIM IN OPERATIONS WITH HIS TROOPS' I FIND HIM PLEASANT STRAIGHTFORWARD, UNASSUMING, BUT CAUTIOUS AND CERTAINLY LACKING THE FLARE OF HIS PREDECESSOR. HE HAS GIVEN ONLY HOME PRESS REFERENCE SINCE ASSUMING COMMAND AND THAT WAS ROUTINE AND UNINSPIRING (REF B). ONE CAN DISCOUNT WHAT AFP CORRESPONDENT SAYS BY VIRTUE OF LATTER'S STRONG ADMIRATION FOR KAULZA DE ARRIAGA. HOWEVER, JUDGING FROM WHAT OTHERS SAY, MACHADO EITHER SIMPLY DOES NOT HAVE WHAT IT TAKES, OR IS PREVENTED FROM SHOWING MUCH OFFENSIVE DRIVE BY THE STRICT CONTROLS REPORTEDLY IMPOSED ON HIM FROM LISBON IN EFFORT TO AVOID ANY REPETITIONS OF ALLEGED WIRIYAMU "MASSACRES". PERHAPS MOST DESCRIPTIVE OF ALL IS LOCAL COCKTAIL REFERENCE TO MACHADO AS "THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER".  
VAN OSS

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## Message Attributes

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**Subject:** NEW COMMANDER IN CHIEF BASTO MACHADO  
**TAGS:** MILI, MZ, (MACHADO, BASTO)  
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